

The Faithful Steward

A Newsletter of the Holy Orthodox Church in North America

Homily of St. Philaret of New York Delivered at Holy Transfiguration Monastery

Beloved brethren!

Among the mortal sins by which people sin, there is the mortal sin of envy. Thus, when I visit you, I always sin by means of this mortal sin. Because when I look at your Brotherhood and how you peacefully labor, struggle, and pray here, I, the sinner, become envious. Because now we have to go round the worldly circuit, and now this is worse than it has ever been. Once St. Ephraim the Syrian asked a monk who liked to go into the world: "What are you doing, monk, going round the world all the time? Do you not fear the 'iniquity and gainsaying in the city'" (Ps. 54:9)?

It has always been difficult for monks in the world. True, today it is difficult in the world not only for monks, but for all truly believing Orthodox people. The Holy Hierarch Ignatius Brianchaninov, that great instructor of Christian life, said that it is difficult for one to save oneself in the world. And now it has become ten times more difficult. And it is not just



Saint Philaret of New York
at Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston

the case that there are too many sins and too much sinful impurity of all sorts – not just this, but that today many spiritual counterfeits have appeared. Someone who is looking for the truth in our times sometimes gets completely lost, coming up against the most varied of doctrines, each one of which declaring that it is true. It makes one dizzy; one does not know where True Christianity and the True Church are.

What I have said does not mean that one should despair or become discouraged. One simply needs to remem-

ber that our times are difficult times, pre-apocalyptic times. And if we see that all manner of false doctrines are overflowing to such an extent that they seem ready to submerge the truth, we should always call to mind the Saviour's words: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Lk 12:32). In these difficult times of ours, the small number of true believers should not confuse them: thus did the Lord Himself foretell, thus did His Apostles speak.

Happy is he who is able to work out his salvation under the shadow of the monastery. Of course, the surrounding environment can sometimes try to break into the monastery itself. But if the brethren diligently fulfill their *podvig*, it will not find much food.

From my whole soul I wish you, beloved brethren, spiritual success and spiritual prosperity. And I ask your prayers for me, the sinner, and for the entire Church, because now is a time that we can equip ourselves only by prayers. And you know from the history of the Church that the Apostles themselves always asked the faithful: "Pray for us!" If the Apostles, those spiritual warriors, asked for prayers, then all the more should we, who are infirm and weak. Pray for us, brethren, that the Lord might help us to do something in our difficult times. May God's blessing be with you all! May the Lord save you!

Transcript of a talk given at the monastery synaxis around the Feast of Theophany. (The year could not be determined.)

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On the Invocation of the Saving Name of Jesus

By St. Symeon of Thessalonica

There are very many prayers. But the loftiest of all prayers, given to us in the Gospel by the Saviour, contains in brief every evangelical mystery and power. This is the saving invocation of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Many of our Holy Fathers labored over it: Chrysostom, who expounded the doctrine of this divine prayer in three homilies; and Climacus; and Nicephorus the ascetic; and St. Diadochus, bishop of Photiki; and St. Symeon the New Theologian. They, and others, expounded this doctrine in a manner worthy of the Divine Spirit that dwelt within them, inasmuch as the prayer itself is spoken by the Holy Spirit; for, as Paul says, “no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor 12:3). He who speaks it is of God, for it is said: “Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God” (1 Jn 4:2).

This divine prayer is the invocation of our Saviour: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me. It is both a prayer and a vow. This prayer is:

1. a confession of faith;
2. an instrument of fellowship with the Holy Spirit;
3. a conduit of divine gifts;
4. the purification of heart;
5. the casting out of demons;
6. the indwelling of Christ;
7. the source of spiritual thoughts and divine intentions;
8. the liberation from sins;
9. the healing of souls and bodies;
10. the mediation of Divine illumination;
11. the drawing in of God’s mercy;
12. the allocator of revelation and Divine mysteries to the humble;
13. the fountain of salvation, inasmuch as it bears within itself the saving Name of our God.

There is only one Name upon which we should call: the Name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. “There is none other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,” as the Apostle says (Acts 4:12). For this reason, it is:

1. a prayer, for in it we ask for Divine mercy;
2. a vow, for through the invocation of Christ we pledge ourselves to Christ Himself;
3. a confession, for by confessing it, Peter was called blessed;
4. a gift of the Spirit, for “no man can say that Jesus is



the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor 12:3);

5. a conduit of Divine gifts, for because of it, Christ promised Peter: “I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven” (Mat 16:19);

6. the cleansing of the heart, for because of it the one praying sees and calls upon God; and, calling upon Him, he is cleansed;

7. the casting out of demons, for by the Name of Jesus Christ demons were cast out, and even now are cast out;

8. the indwelling of Christ, for Christ abides in us when we remember Him; and this remembrance fills us with joy, for it is written: “I remembered God and I was gladdened” (Ps 76:4);

9. the source of spiritual thoughts and Divine intentions, for Christ is the treasury of all wisdom and knowledge, which He grants to those in whom He abides;

10. the liberation from sins, for it is said: “whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven” (Mt 16:19);

11. the healing of souls and bodies, for it is said: “In the Name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk” (Acts 3:6); and: “Aeneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole” (Acts 9:34);

12. the conduit of Divine inspiration, for Christ is the true Light, imparting His light and grace upon all who call upon Him: “And let the brightness of the Lord our God be upon us” (Ps 89:17); and again: “he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (Jn 8:12);

13. the attraction of God’s mercy, for we ask for mercy, and the Lord is merciful and kind-hearted upon all who call upon Him, quickly requiting those who cry unto Him;

14. the allocator of Divine revelations and mysteries to the humble, for the prayer itself was given to the fisherman Peter by revelation of the Heavenly Father; and Paul was caught up by Christ and heard revelations; this prayer always acts in like manner;

15. the source of salvation, for, as the Apostle says, “there is none other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12); and again: “He is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world” (Jn 4:42). Therefore, on the last day “every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil 2:11);

16. a sign of our faith, for we are and call ourselves Christians;

17. witness to the fact that we are of God, for, as we have said, “Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist” (1 Jn 4:2-3).

Therefore, all believers should confess the Name of Christ unceasingly for the proclamation of faith; for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, from which nothing can ever separate us; for the grace that flows from His Name; for the forgiveness and remission of sins; for healing, sanctification, enlightenment and; and, above all, for salvation.

The Apostles taught and performed wondrous deeds in this Divine Name. The divine Evangelist says: “But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.” Behold faith! “And that believing ye might have life through His Name” (Jn 20:31). Behold salvation and life!

Therefore, every pious Christian ought to invoke this Name unceasingly as prayer, with both his mind and tongue, while standing and walking, sitting and lying down, talking and working; and let him compel himself to do so continuously. He will thereby acquire great quietness and joy, as those who are practiced therein know from experience. But inasmuch as this is not always wholly convenient for those living in the world, or even for monks when they are in the world, everyone should, at the very least, dedicate a specific time for prayer. Everyone – clergy, monks, and laymen – should have this prayer as a model and perform it whenever possible, as a sacred activity.

Clergy ought to dedicate themselves to this activity as an apostolic and divine preaching, one that produces divine fruits, thereby witnessing to their love for Christ.

Those living in the world ought to perform this prayer as much as strength permits them, seeing therein a seal and sign of their faith, a protection and sanctification, and a weapon against every temptation.

As such, when everyone – clergy, laity, and monks – arises from sleep, he should first of all think of Christ and, above all, give remembrance to Him, thereby submitting to Christ the first-fruit and sacrifice of every thought. We should remember Christ above all, since He saved and greatly loved us. We are and call ourselves Christians, we have put on Christ in divine Baptism, we are sealed by His chrism, we have partaken and continue to partake of His Holy Body and Blood, we are His members and temples, we are clothed in Him, and He abides in us. We should love and remember Him always. Therefore, everyone ought to count it as his duty, as far as possible, to perform this prayer at a specific time of day and for a specific number of times.

A biographical note on Saint Symeon

The future saint was born in Constantinople, which he fervently loved, praising it as the focal point of the Orthodox world even during the final years of the dwindling Eastern Roman Empire.

He embraced monasticism with the name Symeon, passing his monastic life in a small cell, possibly in the Monastery of Sts. Kallistos and Ignatius of Xanthopoulos. Symeon was a firm supporter of the theology of St. Gregory Palamas, an ardent follower of monastic ideals, and a zealot of Orthodoxy. He was later ordained hieromonk and, historians speculate, may have been at the Patriarchal court.

At the end of 1416, or the beginning of 1417, Symeon was consecrated Archbishop of Thessalonica. This new ministry was a grievous burden for him, and his health seriously deteriorated. As he himself relates, he was restored to health through the intercessions of the Great Martyr Demetrius of Thessalonica, the patron saint of the cathedral city.

St. Symeon served as Archbishop of Thessalonica during the final thirteen years it was under the authority of the Byzantine Emperors, almost to the time of its capture by the Turks in 1430. For nearly the entire period of his archpastoral ministry, Thessalonica was under threat of immediate capture by the Turks or complete submission to the Venetians. Many inhabitants wanted to surrender the city to avoid being conquered or put into the hands of the Venetians. The Saint's uncompromising loyalty both to the Emperor and to Holy Orthodoxy earned him many enemies, but he was able to keep the city faithful to these ideals until his repose in September 1429. Only six months later, left without its steadfast primate, the cathedral was converted into a mosque.

St. Symeon was the author of many works on liturgical, pastoral, canonical, dogmatic, apologetic, moral, historical, and political topics. He was an ardent defender of Orthodoxy in everything he wrote. Characteristic of his writings is this phrase: “The true good of the people is to be Orthodox; if not, it is better to die.”

The saint is recognized as a great Byzantine liturgist. He is best known for his massive work, Dialogue Against the Heresies and on Our Only True Christian Faith, as well as On the Sacred Rites and Mysteries of the Church, which is regarded as a classic. Along with several other of his works, it was first published by Patriarch Dorotheus of Jerusalem in Iasi in 1683; it was translated into Modern Greek in 1791 and into Russian in 1856-1857; later it was reproduced in Migne's Patrologia Graeca (volume 155), Paris, 1866. In 1940, a manuscript was discovered with twenty unpublished works by St. Symeon, which were published in 1979 and 1981.

An Exposition of the Patristic Teaching Concerning the Name of God

Holy Martyr Callistratus
27 September/10 October, 2012

We, the hierarchs of the Holy Orthodox Church in North America, provide this resume of the patristic teachings concerning the Name of God, and do hereby declare that these traditional teachings on this subject are held by us unconditionally and without reservation.

All should understand that, by these pronouncements, we hierarchs are not Name-worshippers as defined in this statement, and that we believe, confess and espouse the Orthodox Christian belief, also defined in this statement.

Concerning the Constantinopolitan patriarchs' resolutions of 1912 and 1913, and also, the decision of the so-called Russian synod of 1913, these pronouncements against the Name-worshippers are not reasoned theologically according to the traditional teachings of the Orthodox Church. Their basic reasoning rejects the patristic teaching that the Name of God is Holy by nature; further they teach that It is not an energy or operation, nor the grace of God. Those who believe this fall under their own condemnation because, like the Name-worshippers they condemn, they believe that God's revealed Name is separate from Him. Further, they perpetually speak of God's eternal Name as if it were some created object, not revealed from on high, as our Fathers teach.

It is for this reason that we hierarchs of the Holy Orthodox Church in North America are not Name-worshippers. The reasons for the hierarchs' refusal to accept the various resolutions and decisions concerning Name-worshippers should also be clear.

Our position is blatantly Orthodox, consistent with the traditional teachings of the Holy Fathers of our Church; this we believe, this we proclaim, this we confess and this we teach.

"We follow in the footsteps of the Holy Fathers."
(*Fourth Ecumenical Council*)

Divergent Teachings

I. Name-worshippers believe:

- 1) That God's Name is his Essence.
- 2) That God's Name is separate from Him.
- 3) That God's Name is another deity.
- 4) That created letters, sounds and random or accidental thoughts about God may be deified, or be used for occult or magical purposes.

II. Orthodox Christians believe:

- 1) That God's Name is *not* His Essence, but rather is the revealed truth about Himself, that is, His Uncreated Energy,

His Uncreated Grace, His Providence, His Glory. In fact, His Essence is unknowable and has no name.

- 2) That God's Name is *not* separate from Him.

- 3) That God's Name is *not* another deity.

- 4) That created letters, sounds and random or accidental thoughts about God must *not* be deified. Further, they believe that these letters or sounds must not be used for occult or magical purposes.

St. Basil of Ancyra (+363) said to the pagan proconsul, "My chief name is 'Christian,' derived from 'Christ,' the Name that is eternal and beyond human understanding." These words are the straightforward and singular confession of every believing Orthodox Christian today also. Furthermore, as St. Cyril of Jerusalem (+386) says, "The Name of God is *in its nature* holy, whether we say so or not." St. John Chrysostom (+407) also tells us, "The Name of God is worthy of praise by *its very nature*," and St. Macarius of Corinth (+1805) affirms, "The Name of God is *by nature* holy and supremely-holy, and the source of sanctification." This makes matters perfectly clear, because, as Orthodox Christians, we know and believe that the *only* Entity that is eternal, holy, supremely-holy, and the source of sanctification *by nature* is God Himself! This can only mean that His Name is indeed God Himself — again, not in His Essence, but in His Grace.

Together with St. Clement of Rome (+100), Orthodox Christians believe that, "The Name of God gave existence to all creation."⁽¹⁾ For St. Clement and the Church Fathers, this is exactly the same as saying "the Grace of God gave existence to all creation;" which is exactly the same as saying, "God gave existence to all creation." This is why the Orthodox, together with St. Tikhon of Zadonsk and St. John of Kronstadt, can say, "The Name of God is God Himself" because the Name of God *is His Energy and Grace*.

In addition, as St. John of Kronstadt affirms, "when you pronounce to yourself in your heart the Name of God, of the Lord, or that of the most Holy Trinity, or of the Lord of Sabaoth, or of the Lord Jesus Christ, *then in that Name you have the Lord's whole being*; in it is His infinite mercy, His boundless wisdom, His inaccessible light, omnipotence, and immutability" — that is to say, you have God's uncreated and divine Grace.

The Hesychastic Councils of the 14th century and the *Synodicon of the Orthodoxy* affirm that *both* the Essence and the Grace of God *are God Himself*, although they are distinct one from the other (see *The True Vine*, #31, p. 12ff.). Therefore, "the Name of God is God" indeed, since His Name and His Grace are one and the same. (2)

III. Name-fighters:

confuse the doctrines described in sections I and II above, and therefore, like the Roman Catholics and Protestants, come to the erroneous conclusion that Orthodox Christians are guilty of pantheism and heresy (see the Resolutions of Patriarch Joachim III of Constantinople in 1912, and the Resolutions of Patriarch Germanus of Constantinople in 1913, and the Russian Synod of 1913.) As a result of their having confused these two divergent teachings, the Constantinopolitan Resolutions of 1912 and 1913 stray from the truth; especially the Russian Synod of 1913 itself comes under the anathemas of the 14th Century Hesychastic Councils and the *Synodicon of Orthodoxy*, because it teaches falsely concerning the Grace of God.

Orthodox Christians cannot “unconditionally” accept, endorse and perpetuate these false teachings.

IV. Concerning the “Russian Synod”

Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky wrote, “Our Church [in Russia] is governed by a layman, or, to say it officially, by a collegial institution never seen by the Church of Christ before... The [Russian] Church is deprived of its lawful head and is given over for enslavement to lay officials, which hide behind an assembly of six or seven hierarchs who are changed every half year, and two presbyters. Who is not aware that such

an institution is uncanonical? That it was not approved at its very inception by two Patriarchs; and even if it had been approved by all four, this would only show the unlawful deed of the Patriarchs and not the canonicity of [Russian] Synodal rule, because no Patriarch can establish and authorize an institution which is unknown to Holy Orthodoxy and which was invented only to bring weakness and decay....”

(Voice of the Church, January 1912)

- + Ephraim, Metropolitan of Boston
- + Makarios, Metropolitan of Toronto
- + Gregory, Auxiliary Bishop of Brookline

Notes:

1. Obviously, for St. Clement, the term “Name of God” signifies a power of God that is *eternal* and *uncreated*.
2. It is precisely to this Orthodox teaching concerning the Name of God that the fathers expelled from Holy Mountain in 1913 adhered. They refused to be labeled as *Name-worshippers*, but rather called themselves *Name-glorifiers*.

Internet Resources

The Holy Orthodox Metropolis of Boston (www.homb.org), the Holy Orthodox Metropolis of Toronto (www.homt.ca), and the St. Peter the Aleut Orthodox Youth Camp are now all on Facebook.

Moreover, Metropolitan Ephraim’s articles are now being posted on the HOMB Facebook page, as well as being grouped together into “Articles of Faith” on the Metropolis website (www.homb.org).

Two other blogs of interest are Bishop Andrew’s personal blog, “News From Markham” (bishopandrewofmarkham.blogspot.com) and “The Wonderful Name” (www.thewonderfulname.info), a website dedicated to raising awareness of the Orthodox Christian patristic teaching concerning the Name of God.

In addition, the parish of Saint Anna in Boston has launched a beautiful, new website: www.saintannas.org.

Announcement of Eucharistic Union

Beloved clergy and the faithful,

It is with heartfelt gratitude to our merciful Saviour, that we are able to inform you of the following joyous news.

The Holy Synods of our two Churches, understanding that we confess one and the same Holy Orthodox Faith, realizing that we are the children of the same father and teacher in Christ, Archbishop Auxentios of blessed memory, accepting fully each others' ordinations, and finding that there is neither reason nor excuse anymore for us to be separated, have come to the unanimous decision to enter into full Communion with each other as Sister Churches, laying as the foundation for this decision the mutual endorsement of our respective written Confessions of Faith and by the hierarchal concelebration between our bishops.

Consequently, as brothers in Christ, we cast into oblivion everything that has been said or enacted against each other, as

well everything that has kept us separated until now and the sign of the unity and reconciliation of our two Churches will be the hierarchical concelebration between our bishops.

May our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ keep our Churches in lasting unity and in the steadfastness to the blameless Orthodox Faith. Amen.

On behalf of the Holy Synod of the True Orthodox Church of Greece.

✠ *Makarios, Archbishop of Athens*

April 5, 2013

On Behalf of the Holy Synod of the Holy Orthodox Church in North America

✠ *Ephraim, Metropolitan of Boston*

March 21, 2013



Synodical Encyclical

Holy Synod of the Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians of Greece

Protocol No. 473-S185
Athens, May 20, 2013

Most holy clergymen, most pious congregation of the Holy Orthodox Church,
The grace of our Lord and Master be with you all!

As we all well know, the Lord said, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments. He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me. This is My commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you" (John 14:15, 21; 15:12.)

In short, our Lord Jesus Christ tells us that if we love Him, then we will keep His commandments, which are all summarized and included in the commandment of love for one another, since according to our heavenly dweller, the Apostle Paul, Love is the fulfilment of the Law (Romans 13:10).

Having all this in mind, our Holy Synod always pursues contacts with Orthodox brethren who do not belong to our domain, as for example the hierarchs of the Genuine Orthodox Christians of America under the most reverend Metropolitan Ephraim, who were not long ago our brothers in the hierarchy and who have drawn their ordinations from our admirable Archbishop Kyr Auxentios.

With great care and diligence for a long period of time we have examined from all sides both our ecclesiastical situation and theirs, as well as administrative issues, and we have found, to our great joy, that there is much uniting us and nothing of importance to keep us apart. Having then examined each other's confession on the sound basis of the holy dogmas and traditions of the Church, and having established and sealed this confession as being truly Orthodox in all, we have decided to reestablish our ecclesiastical communion and seal it with holy concelebrations here, as well as in America in this present after-Paschal period.

With this present statement we establish all of us as partakers of the happiness of this joyful event which took place in America of the holy concelebrations between us in accordance with our union in Christ, for which we offer great doxology to the Triune God Who wishes all His true children peace and love. To Him be glory and dominion unto the ages. Amen.

For the Holy Synod

✙ Makarios

Archbishop of Athens and All Greece

Visit of Archbishop Makarios of Athens to North America

His Beatitude, Archbishop Makarios of Athens, visited North America in May 2013, to seal the Eucharistic Unity established between the True Orthodox Church of Greece and the Holy Orthodox Church in North America. On Thomas Sunday (April 29/May 12, 2013), he concelebrated the Divine Liturgy with His Eminence, Metropolitan Makarios of Toronto, His Grace, Bishop Gregory of Brookline, and His Grace, Bishop Andrew of Markham, at the Cathedral Church of St. Nicholas in Toronto.

On the Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearers (May 6/19, 2013), His Beatitude concelebrated the Divine Liturgy with His Grace, Bishop Gregory of Brookline, and His Grace, Bishop Andrew of Markham, at St. Anna's Church in Boston.

Archbishop Makarios paid another visit to North America in December 2013, accompanied by Archimandrite Makarios, the abbot of the Monastery of St. James the Brother of the Lord near Thessalonica.

Hierarchical Concelebrations in Greece

At the invitation of Archbishop Makarios of Athens, this past August 2013, Metropolitan Makarios of Toronto and Bishop Gregory of Brookline paid a visit to Greece, where they concelebrated with the hierarchs of the Holy Synod of the True Orthodox Church of Greece. Concelebrations were held in Athens, Thessaloniki, Lamia, and Serres.

Consecration of Bishop Andrew of Markham

Following his unanimous election by the Synod of Bishops, Priestmonk Andrew of Holy Transfiguration Monastery was consecrated Auxiliary Bishop of Markham, within the Holy Orthodox Metropolis of Toronto, at the St. Nicholas Cathedral in Toronto on Meat-fare Sunday (February 25/March 10, 2013).

The future Bishop Andrew was born in Washington D.C., where he and his younger brother grew up before spending time in Arlington, Virginia. His father was from Washington D.C. as well, while his mother came from Freeland, Pennsylvania.

Bishop Andrew comes from a long-line of Herron family descendants; his first ancestors immigrated to the United States in 1710 from Alsace-Lorraine, France. However, the generations that followed were mostly of Irish and English lineage.

Growing up Roman Catholic, Fr. Andrew was taught to value the historical witness of the Christian Church. Fr. Andrew explains: "History is unequivocal. The structure of the

Church in the first centuries is the same structure that the Orthodox Catholic [i.e. Universal] Church has today."

Fr. Andrew's study and interest in theater were quickly overcome by his love for God and his conviction that the historical Church founded by Jesus Christ is the Orthodox Church. In 1963, at the age of 20, he became an Orthodox Christian; following this, he enrolled in Holy Trinity Seminary in Jordanville, New York, where he studied for two years. In July 1968 he entered Holy Transfiguration Monastery, where he lived for 45 years.

He was ordained deacon in November 1972 and raised to the rank of Archdeacon (the highest rank among monastic deacons) in 1988. He was ordained to the priesthood on October 19, 2012.

Bishop Andrew will reside at St. Nicholas House in the Holy Orthodox Metropolis of Toronto and continue to help establish the Orthodox Faith in the Metropolis of Toronto through teachings, experience, and personal example.



Repose of Mother Nina-Macrina

On Wednesday, June 6/19, 2013, Nina Seco reposed in the Lord. She had been tonsured into the Great Schema with the name Macrina, in honor of St. Macrina, the sister of St. Basil the Great.

Raised as an atheist by her parents, Mother Macrina embraced Orthodoxy in her youth with a fervor that few can match. She was in no small part responsible for the printing of the first comprehensive prayer book in English, containing for the first time all the essential prayers used by the Orthodox layman in the Russian practice. She supplied material for the early numbers of *Orthodox Life* and helped Fr. Anthony Grabbe when he was starting St. Sergius High School in New York City.

She was co-founder, together with Mother Matrona, of Holy Nativity Convent. Mother Matrona recalled that when



she and Mother Macrina were touring the monasteries and holy places of the Orthodox homelands, Mother was always studying, trying to learn anything that would be of use in the founding and running of a convent. Though she could not stay in the convent herself, her work and sacrifices in the early days made it possible for others to build on what she had helped start. And her reward here was to receive the tonsure and the name of the saint whom she dearly loved.

For the last thirty plus years, Mother had been a help and support to the many projects undertaken by Fr. Nektas Palassis and the parish of St. Nectarius in Seattle, WA. She touched so many lives for good and she will be missed by many people around the world.

Abbess installed at St. Mary Magdalene Convent

The Convent St. Mary Magdalene in Catlett, Virginia, had a very special patronal feast in 2013. On Sunday, July 22/August 4 – the feast day of St. Mary Magdalene – Mother Irene was installed as the Abbess of the Convent. The joy of the feast was doubled by the fact that on the same day, novice Elizabeth was tonsured into the Holy and Angelic Schema as nun Raphaela.



In front: Abbess Irene, newly-tonsured Mother Raphaela, and Mother Evdokia, together with Father James Bockman, Archimandrite Isaac, and Protopresbyter Rodion Laskowsky

Three New Deacons

Shortly before the Feast of the Holy Apostles, 2013, Hierodeacon Samuel (formerly of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad) was received into our Church. Fr. Samuel entered the monastic life in Jordanville in 1992 and was ordained to the diaconate in Munich, Germany, in 2007. As part of his obediences, he was a faculty member of Holy Trinity Seminary and assistant editor of *Orthodox Life*.

On the feast of St. Anna (July 25/August 7, 2013), Fr. Savvas Papadopoulos was ordained to the diaconate at the church of St. Anna in Roslindale, Boston. It was a jubilant patronal feast for the whole parish, especially for Fr. Savva's family.

On the Feast of Transfiguration of our Savior, 2013, the patronal feast of our Monastery in Boston, Fr. Lazarus was ordained to the holy diaconate.

On the photograph: newly ordained Father Deacon Savvas, his parents, Christos and Eleni, Diaconissa Maria, daughters Irene and Christina, together with Metropolitan Ephraim of Boston, Bishop Gregory of Brookline and Fr. Dimitry Kukonov.



Opening of St. Haralampus Mission Parish in Florida

On Sunday, July 8/21, 2013, the inaugural Divine Liturgy was served at the newly-formed parish of St. Haralampus in Orlando, Florida, by His Grace, Bishop Gregory of Brookline. Approximately twenty-five to thirty people were in attendance.

A parish has been desperately needed in Florida for several reasons. Many faithful often travel to Florida to visit family, take business trips or vacations, and need a place to attend church. In addition, there are faithful who reside in Florida who have been conducting Reader's services in their homes and had no local parish home.

Several faithful from New Hampshire, who often travel to the Orlando area to visit family, desired to show their families – some non-Orthodox and some new calendar Orthodox – our true and holy Orthodox faith by means of example. So, with the help of Father Isaac and Holy Transfiguration Monastery, a building was secured for the parish.

A foreclosed home located just north of the Orlando International Airport was acquired six months earlier. Much of the interior of the home was knocked to the studs to make it habitable. The cinder-block wall between the garage and living room was knocked down to form the altar, iconostasis, and royal doors. The church also serves as the trapeza. In addition, the home has a small kitchen. There are two bedrooms, still undergoing renovation, as well as two bathrooms. There is a sizable backyard with lush green grass, which has great potential.

When Bishop Gregory arrived, he busily got to work hanging the icons and preparing the altar and the church for services. Peter Masterjohn of Ipswich, MA, used his amazing woodworking skills to build a chanting stand and other liturgical tables for the church. He also chanted during Vespers and the Divine Liturgy.

God provided many helpers – including some non-Orthodox – who painted, cleaned, and helped with the final touches to prepare the church for services.

It will only be fair to say, however, that none of this would have been possible without the initiative and diligence of George Mylonakis and his family, through whose tireless efforts, an old, unkempt house was transformed into a beautiful Orthodox chapel.



Bishop Gregory of Brookline together with the faithful and the guests of Saint Haralampus parish in Orlando, Florida.

The Faithful Steward

Clergy Synaxis 2013

From October 4/7 to 6/19, 2013, the annual Clergy Synaxis of the Holy Orthodox Church in North America was held at St. Philaret's Diocesan House in Boston.

The Synaxis commenced with diocesan reports made by the hierarchs. Of special interest were the accounts of Metropolitan Makarios and Bishop Gregory of their recent trip to Greece at the invitation of Archbishop Makarios of Athens.

Hierodeacon Samuel and Thomas Deretich presented two theological papers, which were followed by lively discussion.

A series of pastoral issues raised by the clergy, as well as by laypeople, were also discussed at length.

The Synaxis concluded with a hierarchical concelebration at the Church of St. Anna.

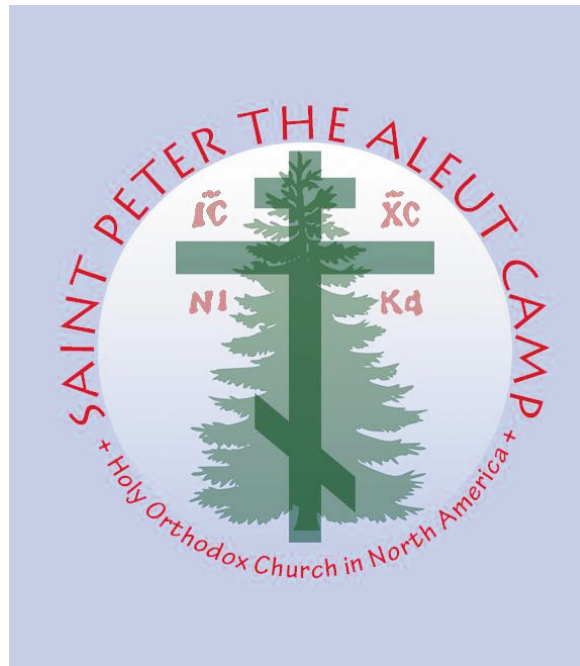




Concelebration in Athens: from left to right, Metropolitan Makarios of Toronto, Archbishop Makarios of Athens, Metropolitan Pancratios of Nemea, Bishop Gregory of Brookline



After the Concelebration in Lamia; from left to right: Metropolitan Euthymius of Thessalonica, Archbishop Makarios of Athens, Metropolitan Makarios of Toronto, Bishop Gregory of Brookline



St. Peter the Aleut Orthodox Youth Camp

Impressions of a participant

The St. Peter the Aleut Orthodox Youth Camp met from August 5/18 to 11/24, 2013, attended by more than forty children.

The familiar shouts of restless children could be heard all through the Lake Sunapee area as cars drove into the campgrounds. There was excitement in the air. We had come from a long tradition of Orthodox Church camp practices, yet wanted to make Saint Peter the Aleut Camp unique – a thing of our own. For this reason, the week began with a tentative plan and, as we drew upon the experiences and thoughts of many, we modified our course of action. It was soon established that the crossroad of ideas was in the kitchen, where the fate of the coming days was decided. This fate did not, however, lie in the hands of few, but had been gathered together from the minds of all who wished to contribute and had brought ideas to the table to be discussed over hot cups of tea. At the end of each night, an hour-to-hour schedule was drawn up on the white board for everyone to see.

After church each morning, little people would eagerly gather around the schedule. Both the excitement and the complaints were noted and the day would take off. As the hours sped by, one could not help but notice that, even in the most confusing and stressful of situations, someone was there to offer support. It was as though, at each instance, Saint Peter would send his aid from around the most unexpected corners. Thus we would finish each day as we had begun it, together and in peace.

Nights at St. Peter's Camp again found a gathering of enthusiasts planning the next day's events, grateful and looking forward to making changes and adding various ideas for the times to come. On the most memorable of such evenings, the trip to Saint Herman's Island was discussed. In hindsight, everyone involved would agree that, if it had not been for the creative and generous help and insight of many at Saint Peter's Camp, the trip would not have been the amazing success that it was. In the end, the same can be said for the entire week. While high praise can be given to everyone's help and dedication, the underlying success of the camp did not lie in the commotion of the planning and organization. Rather, it was through the intercessions of our beloved saints, especially of Saint Peter the Aleut, that we were blessed to create a place where all Orthodox children (and adults) can look forward to coming every summer.

The next St. Peter the Aleut Orthodox Youth Camp will be held Sunday, August 10, to Sunday, August 16, 2014, in the same location as 2013: the beautiful Sunapee Lake region in the heart of New Hampshire. We welcome young people between the ages of 8 and 16. The price is \$400 for the first child, \$375 for the second child, etc. Places are limited to 50 campers. Please see either the HOMB webpage: (www.homb.org) or the St. Peter's Camp Facebook page to register.



Saint Peter the Aleut Camp, 2013



Baptist Pond and "Saint Herman's Island", both of which are located in the immediate vicinity of the camp.



Meeting with the clergy and monastics



The Camp Chapel



About Our Logo A Divine Confirmation

The cross on our masthead commemorates the miraculous appearance of the sign of the Cross near Athens on Sept. 14 (according to the traditional Orthodox calendar) in 1925. Anti-Orthodox and secularist forces in power in Greece, together with the Ecumenical Patriarchate, had forced the changing of the traditional church calendar in 1924 as a first step toward uniting with the heterodox churches of the West. Shining in the evening sky on the traditional feast day of the Exaltation of the Cross, this extraordinary appearance of the Cross is a divine confirmation of Holy Tradition in the Orthodox Church and of the calendar as one facet of Holy Tradition.

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THE DIOCESE NEEDS SUPPORT

“Every good giving and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights” (James 1:17). The perfect gift is the one that only membership in the Church can give: the knowledge of true worship and the grace of the Holy Mysteries. But our era suffers from a famine of truth and the true worship of God. In our weak way, we try to feed those who hunger for God. Your prayers and your donations help the Church in this awe-inspiring ministry. Another way to help is to make a bequest to the Church in your will. Remember that God loves a cheerful giver. Also remember that *The Faithful Steward* is in need of your support.



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